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Thai Leather Trade Mission Will Visit Los Angeles

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- ttela
- Thai Trade Center, Los Angeles
- August 24, 2010

THAI LEATHER TRADE MISSION WILL VISIT LOS ANGELES

AUGUST 30-SEPTEMBER 3

U.S. Companies Interested in Meeting Thai Leather Good Manufacturers and Designers Should Contact Thai Trade Center, Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES – A Thai leather group comprising leading leather products manufacturers will visit here August 30-September 3 to seek potential trade partners who would be interested in representing their brands in the United States, [Thai Trade Center, Los Angeles](#) (TTC) announced today.

Eight leading Thai leather goods companies will participate in the trade mission to Los Angeles – [Eleganza](#), [Champ Ace](#), [Champ Kabin](#), [MBP Leather Industries \(Albédo brand\)](#), [O.C.I. Leather Co., Ltd](#), [Paragon](#), [Shepherd Co., Ltd](#), and [Uni G Co. Ltd](#). Most of these companies have been exporting to the United States and/or Europe for 10 to 20 years or more and are looking for opportunities to expand their business in North America, according to Thai Trade Center LA Executive Director Chantira J. Vivatrat.

Representatives of the companies will meet with U.S. trade associations and businesses to learn what types of designs and leather products appeal most to their customers.

They also will look for new markets for the kinds of creative leather items Thai artisans are designing and opportunities to strengthen the image of Thai brands being sold in the United States.

“Thai designs and quality of Thai leather products are versatile and varied and can satisfy both the general consumer and premium markets, and we believe there’s an untapped potential for them here,” Mrs. Vivatrat said.

The group will visit the [Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising](#) (FIDM) in Los Angeles to discuss potential future cooperation between American designers and Thai manufacturers.

In addition, participants will meet with distributors and logistics companies in the Los Angeles area.

The trade mission is part of the Thai government's plan to introduce the country's various leather brands to the American market.

TTC is helping arrange meetings for the mission and will work closely with the group to develop potential trade opportunities for Thai leather products in the U.S. market.

Among the leather products the participating companies manufacture are hand bags, briefcase, wallets, corporate premium gifts, diary folders, business card holders, and other small leather goods.

U.S. companies interested in meeting with the Thai leather mission or seeking additional information should contact TTC at ttcla@live.com or 323-466-9645.

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Thai Economic Officials Discuss Trade, Trees, and Politics during Visit to Seattle, Washington

- ttcla
- Thai Trade Center, USA
- August 20, 2010

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Thai economic officials explored closer ties between Thai and Washington State companies, helped resolve concerns about Thailand's political situation, and discussed with U.S. and other Asian government officials how to control illegal harvesting and international trade of protected forests during a series of meetings in Seattle in July 2010.

Kessiri Siripakorn, Commercial Minister of the [Royal Thai Embassy](#) in Washington, DC, [Office of Commercial Affairs \(OCA\)](#), led an economic team to Seattle for the sessions with the private and public sector last month. Other team members were Philaslak Yukkasemwong, [Thai Economic and Financial Minister](#); Jittima Srithaporn, OCA counselor; and Chantira Jimreivat Vivatrat, Executive Director of [Thai Trade Center Los Angeles \(TTC\)](#).



The Thai economic team maintained a busy schedule in Seattle.

The Thai economic team conducted a seminar with the [Thai Association of Washington](#) on how to encourage Thai businesses in the Seattle area to expand relationships with Thai companies and promote trade between Thailand and the State of Washington. Association members were eager to explore business opportunities and wanted to know how to contact Thai exporters directly.



A seminar with the Thai Association of Washington explored doing business with Thailand.

The Thai economic team agreed to work closely with the association to match companies with business potential and to organize visits by Seattle companies to Thailand to attend trade shows and meet with exporters.

During a meeting with William Stafford, president of the [Trade Development Alliance of Greater Seattle](#), the economic team clarified the political situation in Thailand, reassured him of the country's stability, and confirmed that business opportunities and relationships between Thailand and the United States remain strong.

The Thais and Mr. Stafford discussed prospects for creating a business relationship between Thailand and the Trade Alliance. Consistent with the Trade Alliance's mission of establishing working relationships with export promotion, international tourism, and international trade and investment organizations, the participants agreed to cooperate with each other and to encourage trade between Thai and Washington businesses.



Mrs. Srithaporn, Mrs. Yukkasemwong, Mr. Stafford, Mrs. Kessiri, Mrs. Vivatrat, and Trade Development Alliance of Greater Seattle Delegation Manager Neepaporn "A"

Boungjaktha (left to right) were all smiles after their meeting.

"Our team's visit has increased the confidence of Seattle companies in doing business with Thailand, which will strengthen relationships between the governments of Thailand and Washington State, Trade Alliance and Thai Association members, and Thai exporters," Mrs. Vivatrat said.

On behalf of Thailand, the economic team also took part in the second meeting of the [Asia-Pacific Regional Dialogue to Promote Trade in Legally Harvested Forest Products](#), co-convened in Seattle by the United States and Indonesia. Other participating countries included Australia, Cambodia, China, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Solomon Islands, and Vietnam.

The [U.S. delegation, led by the Assistant U.S. Trade Representative \(USTR\) for Environment and Natural Resources](#), included officials from the Departments of State, Agriculture, Commerce, and Justice, plus the Agency for International Development.

To solve the problem of illegal forest products, USTR proposed creating laws and regulations on international harvests of forest and wood products.



Thai officials participated in the Asia-Pacific Regional Dialogue to Promote Trade in Legally Harvested Forest Products.

The participating countries, which were concerned about controlling illegal logging and international trade in illegally acquired wood and forest products, discussed how their governments would implement and enforce such laws.

The Thai team explained Thailand's strict controls on importing and exporting wood and forest products, which are regulated by [Thailand's Department of Foreign Trade](#). Most Thai wood products are made from rubber trees, which are raised and harvested sustainably.

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Authentic Thai Cuisine Featured at Le Cordon Bleu North America

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- Thai Trade Center, USA
- August 20, 2010

Thai Government Officials, Los Angeles Area Chefs, Food Industry Executives, and Food Writers Feted Thai Food Ambassador Chef McDang

Los Angeles-area chefs, restaurateurs, food and beverage executives, the news media, and Thai government officials gathered at the residence of the Royal Thai Consulate General of Los Angeles August 5th to celebrate the completion by Thai celebrity Chef M.L. Sirichalerm Svasti, nicknamed Chef McDang, of his series of cooking courses at Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts in Pasadena, Las Vegas, and Dallas.



Photo courtesy of Chef McDang

The celebration at the home of Thailand Consul General Damrong Kraikruan marked the fifth year that the Royal Thai Consulate General in Los Angeles has hosted an event to celebrate and promote authentic Thai cuisine. The goal is to educate chefs and food writers in the United States about the rich history of Thai cuisine and to teach them about how to use Thai ingredients in cooking genuine Thai dishes.

Thai Trade Center Los Angeles Executive Director Chantira J. Vivarat, who participated in the reception, said, "Through such events, we are introducing Thai cuisine and ingredients to Americans and encouraging them to try our delicious and healthful food. We hope those who experience our exceptionally versatile and exotic cuisine will become interested in and excited about the different foods, flavors, and spices Thais use, and try them."

Mrs. Vivarat added, "As more Americans are exposed to Thai cooking and ingredients, we expect demand to grow for bringing more Thai food products to the U.S. market."

Chef McDang's first English-language cookbook, The Principles of Thai Cookery, offers numerous authentic Thai recipes. It served as the textbook for his culinary training classes at Le Condon Bleu College of Culinary Art. He signed copies of the recently published book at the Consul General's reception.



Photo courtesy of Chef McDang

Thailand's leading food expert, chef and writer, Chef McDang was born into the Thai royal family. A graduate of the Culinary Institute of America, he served as executive chef and owned and managed restaurants in several cities in the United States before returning to Thailand in 1993. There, Chef McDang began writing food columns and cook books. An ambassador for Thai cuisine, he has hosted a weekly television cooking show and is a food consultant for a number of companies. Follow him on [Facebook](#).

Related Posts

[Five Top Thai Chefs of the World Will Demonstrate their Skills in LA in July](#), [U.S. Patent and Trademark office grants DEP a Certification Mark for its Thai Select Thai Cuisine marks](#), [Thai Food – A Unique Experience](#), [Thai Ingredients Can Add Zest and Health to Everyday Fare](#), [Lemongrass & Limes](#)

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Thai Flavors



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The Jewels of Bangkok!

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One of the international trade fairs that people always get excited about attending is [the Bangkok Gems & Jewelry Fair](#).
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Jewelry Fair. Yes!

Everyone likes the sparkling atmosphere, friendly environment, extravagant feel, and genuinely warm welcome, which combine to make every visitor feel as though he or she is being treated as a special person. Who doesn't enjoy VIP treatment?

It's also fun to mingle with buyers from all over the world who are astounded by exquisite gemstones and amazing jewelry displayed by companies from Thailand and many other countries.



Certainly I enjoy visiting the bi-annual Gems & Jewelry Fair in Bangkok, the international hub of gems and jewelry. I've gone many times and never have been bored.

I still remember the last time I went. The opening ceremony was soooo fantastic! Dancers, models in island and exotic beach costumes with incredible jewelry, and a truly festive atmosphere.

Let me tell you, I'm looking forward to seeing what this year's opening ceremony and theme are going to be like!

As deputy director for Thai Trade Center, Los Angeles, I go to a lot of trade fairs, but believe me, this is the crème de la crème!

My favorite sections of the fair are always the silver and gold areas, because they are not only great places to find exceptional and interesting jewelry for men (and women), but they also have plenty of store selling asset that make for good investments.



But I also welcome the chance to see the latest collections of unique jewelry, discover up-and-coming young designers, find couture designers and producers, and figure out what the next trends will be in jewelry.

I hope everyone attending the 46th Bangkok Gems & Jewelry Fair, September 7-11, will enjoy their special moments at the fair as much as I intend to. Fashion shows, music, design awards, dancing, and all sorts of festivities – this fair has it all.

You'll find more information on the fair [here](#). Have fun, and maybe I'll see you there!

Andy

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[The 46th Bangkok Gems & Jewelry Fair, Bangkok International Gift Fair and Bangkok International Houseware Fair 2010, 45th Bangkok Gems & Jewelry Fair 2010, Finding Thai Products in the Shoppers' Paradise of the California Gift Show, FEMININE JEWELRY CO., LTD.](#)

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Finding Thai Products in the Shoppers' Paradise of the California Gift Show

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While searching for market opportunities for Thai products at the [California Gift Show](#) 2010 last month, I was excited to find many Thai items that already have been introduced to the U.S. market.

The merchandise had been brought here either by U.S. importers or Thai exporters. With their high quality and unique design, Thai gifts and accessories should prove successful in several niche markets and, in fact, already are doing so.

Seeing the items on display made me proud and happy that so many young Thai entrepreneurs are starting to do business internationally, because that's where success lies in the future. Their experiences in the global markets will help them strengthen their businesses in the years to come.

One company that caught my eye was [Hand and Heart](#), a wholesale distributor and importer of quality gifts and collectables. Hand and Heart was introducing purses, handbags, small luggage, caps, and accessories, including some from Thailand. In addition to selling denim fabric articles, the company sells fine handicrafts, ceramics and quality gifts. Having concentrated on America's East Coast, Hand and Heart wants to expand to the West Coast as well.



In addition to a variety of leather and cloth accessories, [Your Needs Company](#) sells colorful [Thai artisan handicrafts](#), including colorful purses and totes. What caught my eye, though, were the new Thai-style art patterns Your Needs introduced at the show – patterns that are clean, delicate, and elegant. The Thai patterns applied to T-shirts, long sleeved shirts, belts, and hand bags were lovely. I was very impressed with the young entrepreneurs who own and operate the company for finding the niche markets and for bringing these products from Thailand to the United States.



Of course my expedition for potential gifts had to include scouting for jewelry, one of Thailand's important exports. I was excited to find [Pom Jewelry](#) exhibiting at the show. Recognized for his unique designs, Pom handcrafts jewelry from semi-precious gems, pearls, gold and silver.



As you may know, Thailand is famous for its gems, which include the [ruby](#), [sapphire](#), [amethyst](#), [aquamarine](#), [garnet](#), [spinel](#), and [zircon](#). Skilled Thai artisans fashion these gems into beautiful fine jewelry, which you can find in the country and also abroad. Thai artisans also produce creative jewelry and accessories from stone, beads, shells, or other materials. Jewelry and accessories are one of the favorite purchases of tourists visiting Thailand, who can find good quality, beautiful designs at reasonable prices. If you'll be in Bangkok in early September, check out the [46th Bangkok Gems & Jewelry Fair](#).

Saa paper, made from bark stripped from young branches of mulberry paper trees, originated in small villages in the [North of Thailand](#). Most Saa paper products still are handmade. Now, however, many firms, of varying sizes, are creating gorgeous products from Saa paper. [Siam Art Creations](#)' beautiful, colorful, and innovative products crafted from Saa paper make wonderful gifts.





When I saw these handbags at the California Gift Show, I knew they were made from Thai silk. Aiming to introduce beautifully designed, premium-quality Thai silk handbags to the United States, last year, two California women launched [Lone Orchid](#). They've been looking for the right markets for these richly colored Thai silk bags, and since that should prove good for Thai silk producers, Thai Trade Center is happy to help. We invited Co-owners Lindy and Ashlea to visit Thailand's [BIG & BIH 2010](#) in October; where they're sure to be inspired by the wide range of Thai silk products that will be exhibited.



[SEAsTra](#) is a fair trade wholesale supplier of Thai handcrafts and products designed for women. George H. Meck, who's passionate about Thailand's ethnic arts and crafts, started the business more than four years ago, working with artisan groups in small villages in the North and Northeast of Thailand such as [Ban Napho Weaving Group](#), [Bantan Weaving Group](#) and [Sakchira](#). [TTC will work closely with George](#) to help introduce more Thai products from the villages to the American market.



As an inveterate shopper, I loved the annual California Gift Show at the Los Angeles Convention Center, and I'm looking forward to going again next year, when I expect even more Thai products to be on display.

Chantira

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Thai Trade Centers Search for More Potential Business in Non Traditional and Untapped Markets

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As [Thai Trade Center](#), Los Angeles (TTC) seeks new opportunities to expand Thai products and services throughout the western USA, Thai Trade Center Deputy Director Somcanae Yodpram (Andy) and I are making inaugural visits to trade shows and companies to determine if what Thailand has to offer would be of interest to various audiences and how best to reach those potential markets.

We wanted to share with you some of our observations and findings and seek your input.

Last month Andy checked out the [Cosmoprof North America 2010](#) in Las Vegas, a major, international beauty and cosmetics event with a focus on the spa and beauty salon industry.



Andy discussed marketing opportunities for Thai spa products and cosmetics with Aureliana de Santis, Cosmoprof North America marketing director.

Personal care items and wellness and spa products from Thailand have a tremendous advantage in the United States because of our nation's reputation for developing high quality products from natural resources.

As a result of Andy's scouting out the show, we will try to bring some Thai companies to Cosmoprof North America next year to introduce to Americans some of Thailand's well-regarded personal care, wellness and spa items as well as cosmetics. Cosmoprof event organizers welcomed TTC and identified an array of potential markets in the United States for Thai products.

Earlier this summer we stopped by the [National Sheriff's Association \(NSA\)](#) 2010 Conference in Anaheim, CA, at the invitation of John Sammons, Thailand's newest Honorary Trade Advisor on the West Coast.



These are the kinds of law enforcement products showcased at NSA.

We talked with law enforcement officers, public safety, and criminal justice professionals about their needs for various products and services and stopped by the booths of the exhibiting Thai manufacturers and exporters, who were showcasing Thai food products, including rice, tuna in plastic bags, fruit-flavored drink mixes, and trash bags, that could be useful to military and civil law enforcement.



TTC Trade Officer Visanu Chomsin (L) Thai Honorary Trade Advisor John Sammons, I, two members of the event organizer team, and Andy talked during our visit to the NSA Conference.

After viewing the NSA exhibition hall, we're convinced Thailand is producing many other items U.S. law enforcement professionals would find useful, including additional types of foods and snacks; uniforms for inmates, police, and soldiers; and personal hygiene products.

Las Vegas again was the scene of another trade show we visited for the first time this year — the 2010 Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC). This unique show draws more than 50,000 fans of ultimate fighting and mixed martial arts. The primary customers of exhibitors there are young people are interested in this as a sport, activity, or hobby. In Thailand, by contrast, mixed martial arts are considered a profession, so the audience is much different.



Fighting demonstrations were popular at UFC.



I talked with a US importer who was displaying Thai boxing products at UFC.

Thai companies selling in the United States under the [Fairtex](#), [Ultra Fight Gear \(UFG\)](#) from [Master Toddy](#), and [Windy Fighting Gear](#) brands have found that boxing equipment, accessories, gloves, protective gear, heavy bags, boxing shirts and shorts, and mouth guards are popular here. So are the services of Thai boxing schools, as you may recall from [my blog on Muay Thai](#) back in June.

After visiting UFC, where I had a chance to talk with a Windy salesman and potential importers, we're going to encourage more Thai manufacturers and training operators to actively pursue additional martial arts equipment and services business in the American market.

As part of our outreach to U.S. companies, in July, we accepted an invitation to visit [Ramcast Ornamental Supply Co.](#), a California firm that specializes in structural steel materials and components and sells its contractors a range of products including structural material, wrought iron supplies, gate hardware, aluminum castings and pickets.



Andy and I got a tour of Ramcast from its president.

We're going to arrange a business match for Ramcast and help them visit some Thai steel manufacturers later this year to explore mutually beneficial opportunities.



Ramcast is using Thai steel products.

This is just the sort of service Thai Trade Center Los Angeles is ready to provide to American and Thai companies – something we do very well and would be happy to do for you.

John Sammons will visit Thailand later this year to discuss with other manufacturers and exporters prospects for bringing more goods and services to the United States. John and our honorary trade advisors continue to look for other opportunities to display the wide range of Thai items that should be of interest to American buyers and to meet with potential business partners.

If you have suggestions on what you want to see here, questions about Thai products, or want us to arrange a trade mission to Thailand, please let us know. We look forward to hearing from you.

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[Trade Center LA Successfully Matches Thai and Oregon Businesses, Mastering the Art of Thai Boxing, “Dwell” on Thai Products!, Thai Leather Trade Mission Will Visit Los Angeles August 30-September 3](#)

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Java Jive – Make my Coffee Thai

How do you begin your day?

Mine invariably begins with a cup of excellent coffee, preferably from Thailand.

Did you know that Thailand produces high quality coffee beans used to make some of the world's best coffee? We at the Thai Trade Center are working with coffee producers and exporters to make Thailand coffee something coffee aficionados will find at their favorite coffee bar, restaurant, and store.

For more than a century, farmers in southern Thailand have been growing Robusta beans, which were introduced to the country in 1904 through the Malay Peninsula.



Photo from www.asiacoffeeimports.com

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Photo from www.asiacoffeeimports.com

Thais began growing Arabica beans in 1950, and in 1972, the King of Thailand introduced Arabica to the mountain regions of northern Thailand to substitute for the opium formerly grown by hill tribes. His Majesty wanted to find replacement crops that were at least as profitable, if not more, than drugs, and his plan worked. Today, Thailand grows and markets internationally high-quality Arabica coffee as well as other replacement crops such as macadamia nuts.

[Asia Coffee Imports](#) is one of several companies exploring opportunities to market Thai coffee in the United States. Its coffee comes from Chiangmai, one of the largest and most culturally significant cities in northern Thailand, and the province surrounding it. A popular tourist destination, [Chiangmai](#) is located among the highest mountains in the country. The elevation and copious amounts of rain are perfect for growing superior-quality coffee beans including Peaberry, Arabica, and Robusta.



Asia Coffee Imports Owner
Roberto De Lopez-
Martinez is exploring
opportunities for Thai
coffee in the USA. Photo
from
www.asiacoffeeimports.com

Not only do I enjoy Asia Coffee Imports beans, but I like the company's commitment to providing a living wage and safe, healthy working conditions to empower low-income farmers. Company owner

Roberto De Lopez-Martinez says, “We work hard to make sure that farmers are getting the wages they deserve by reducing the cost paid to third party agents.”

Another Certified Fair Trade company whose coffee I savor is [Doi Chaang Coffee](#). Doi Chaang sells premium, single-origin, organic Arabica coffee raised in Northern Thailand’s Golden Triangle by some 800 families in the village of Doi Chang. The Akha hill tribe people cultivate the coffee in small family gardens following sustainable agriculture practices that minimally affect the beautiful natural habitat.



Photo from www.doichaangcoffee.com

The villagers process the coffee in the plants and drying facilities they built and operate and store the coffee in their own warehouses to maintain quality control over their product and earn a reasonable wage.



The Akha people pick their beans and handle all processing. Photo from www.doichaangcoffee.com

A [Canadian](#) group of coffee fanciers provides financing, marketing, roasting, and distribution for the international market, including sales to the USA. Check out [Doi Chaang's blog!](#)

[VPP Coffee](#), which claims to produce “the best coffee in Thailand,” raises Arabica coffee beans coffee in Thailand’s [Omkoi](#) district, home to the Lahu farmers, about 180 kilometers south of the city of Chiangmai. VPP roasts its beans, blends them, then packs the beans immediately to lock in freshness

for good aroma and flavor.

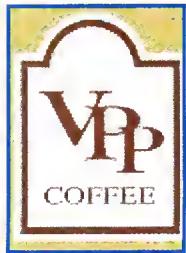


Photo from
www.vppcoffee.com/VPPcoffee.com.

Among the awards VPP has received are those for Good Governance in 2005, Social Venture Network Asia (SVN) in 2006 (which recognizes high standards of positive social and environmental responsibility), Specialty Coffee Association of America (SCAA) 2008 Roasters Guild of the Year (which highlights the craft of specialty coffee roasting), and Bai Po Business Awards in 2009.

VPP has a strong Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program, with an emphasis on children and schools. The company regularly donates money to help support education, school activities, and infrastructure in Omkoi. VPP built a new restroom at one school in the province and provided storage tanks for clean water for another.



VPP's CSR program supports children. Photos from www.vppcoffee.com/VPPcoffee.com.



VPP's CSR program supports children. Photos from www.vppcoffee.com/VPPcoffee.com.

The company also underwrites an annual scholarship for two provincial schools and each year gathers donations from customers, which it gives to indigent Thais and minority groups.

In the near future, you can expect to hear more about coffee from these three companies and others.

Thailand's Department of Export Promotion (DEP), of which TTC is a part, will introduce additional Thai producers and exporters at the next [Thaifex](#) and at trade shows throughout the United States. For more information, regularly check our [trade events calendar](#).

Meanwhile, join me in drinking Thai coffee wherever and whenever you can. Bottoms up!

Chantira

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Visitors to Bite of Seattle 2010 Get a Chance to Bite into Thai Flavors

A hot, sunny day recently found me in [Seattle](#), one of my favorite West Coast seaports, especially during the summer.

While I was officially in town on business representing Thai Trade Center Los Angeles, I combined work and

pleasure by visiting [Comcast Bite of Seattle](#), the premier food festival of the Pacific Northwest. This year's event included more than 50 restaurants and 30 food product companies.



An overview of Comcast Bite of Seattle.

What brought me to [Bite](#) was the three Thai restaurants that were participating in along with a variety of other ethnic food eateries at a festival whose promoters say provides "opportunities to sample some of the best food that local Seattle chefs and restaurants have to offer."

You may be familiar with some of the most popular savory Thai dishes such as [Pad Thai](#), chicken satay, and curries, and those certainly were crowd pleasers at Bite. Exhibitors offered either [large servings or less expensive, bite-size samples](#). [Thai Fusion restaurant's](#) samplings, for example, included grilled beef panang served with cucumber salad and bread dipped in peanut sauce.



There was high request for Thai food.

Many of those attending also eagerly sipped fresh, cold drinks such as [Thai young coconut water](#), Thai ice tea, and Thai ice coffee, plus Thai fruit juices. These were especially refreshing on a hot day as area residents and visitors swarmed the grassy area around the Seattle Center, where most of the Bite festival took place. (If you haven't tried young coconut water, you're missing a real treat. Just drill a hole in a [young Thai coconut](#), insert a straw, and enjoy this natural energy drink.)



Servers of Thai young coconut kept busy meeting requests for this unique drink.

Next year, the Thai Tourism Authority plans to participate in [Bite of Seattle](#), which will bring in more interesting Thai culture and Thai tastes for festival goers to experience and enjoy.

Start making your plans now to be there and enjoy a taste of Thailand. Maybe I'll see you there in 2011!

Chantira

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Thai Flavors
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Thailand's Cosmetic and Spa Products Industry

Known for its natural beauty, Thailand also is gaining recognition for products that tone, soothe, and adorn the face and body, such as skin care, cosmetics, and spa products. The country rapidly is becoming the hub of healthcare and beauty in Asia, Asia's "Wellness Capital," and a [one-stop shop for purchasing healthcare and beauty products and services](#).

Thailand's cosmetic industry comprises large companies such as TG Nature Care and others that manufacture products for internationally famous brands from the United States, the European Union, and Japan as part of the original equipment designer (OED) and original design manufacturer (ODM) market.

In addition, a number of Thai cosmetic firms manufacture their own brands and are gaining in popularity overseas.

Factories producing cosmetics and spa products for the international market are equipped with modern laboratories. Their manufacturing processes and research are monitored closely by scientists and meet all international standards.

[SSUP Group](#), one of Thailand's leading companies in the beauty and wellness industries, manufactures and sells internationally makeup and hair and body products under the [Oriental Princess](#) and [Cute Press](#) brands.



Information on other Thai cosmetic and personal care companies is available online, as is a [directory of Thai companies](#) that export cosmetics, toiletries, and baby products. Award-winning spa products by Thailand's [Erb](#), [HARNN](#), and [THANN](#) are popular in Europe, Japan, and, increasingly in North America, where they are

winning favorable reviews in the news media.



Photo from Daily Xpress

Pattree Bhakdibutr, one of Thailand's leading fashion designers, created Erb's soap, body and facial lotions, oils, and other products from natural herbs, flowers, and roots. HARNN's natural and organic oils, lotions, and other home spa treatments for the hair, body, and face have been featured in international issues of many lifestyle magazines, including *Bazaar*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Anywhere*, and *Luxe*. THANN's natural hair, body, and skin care products are formulated from botanicals derived by combining the art of natural therapy with modern dermatological science.

Thailand's tropical climate and enormous biodiversity have resulted in vast natural resources used to create superior beauty and spa care products unavailable elsewhere. While the amazing healing and beautifying properties of Thailand's plants have been appreciated for generations by local people, only recently have they been scientifically researched and systematically developed to maximize their potential. As a result, consumers may now find superior-quality Thai spa products made from coconut oil, lemongrass, galangal, turmeric, tamarind, rice bran oil, and mangosteen, all produced in Thailand.

Among the popular Thai products used in spa treatments in other Asian countries such as Japan are heated herbal compresses that help relieve muscle and joint pain and swelling. A special blend of therapeutic Thai herbs is wrapped into a cloth ball, steamed or micro-waved, then placed on the body, creating a soothing effect similar to a light massage or acupuncture.

Companies and individuals wishing to establish traditional Thai spas also may purchase equipment, such as futons or special massage tables, as well as natural or organic skin care products, from Thai companies.

The development of spa and beauty products is a natural outgrowth of Thailand's tradition of good health and total well-being and complements the kingdom's rise as a preferred healthcare destination for overseas patients.

In fact, personal wellness is one of the fastest growing aspects of Thailand's healthcare industry, with strong support from the Royal Thai government. The country quickly is becoming Asia's center for health treatments and attracting patients from around the globe seeking a wide range of top-quality cosmetic and medical services in one of the world's most beautiful locations.

Thailand's prestigious spas offer luxury and quality, and their therapists understand Thai massage, which provides physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual balance through acupressure, passive yoga therapy, and reflexology, as well as Thai herbal saunas, steam, and heated herbal compresses. Some of the newer Thai spas combine the best of East and West, with traditional Thai massage, developed over thousands of years, plus weight loss programs, holistic treatments, and a wide range of relaxing and rejuvenating services. For example, Bangkok-based Leelawadee Spa attracts international visitors seeking traditional Thai therapy and the opportunity to learn Thai massage, as well as also foot massage, Swedish massage, body scrubs, and body wraps.

Given the popularity of spas in Thailand, a number of Thai companies are offering their **spa services** internationally to create spas that mirror the Thai approach to wellness.



[Spa Origins Co., Ltd.](#), formerly Horwath Spa Consulting Co., Ltd., designs, develops, and operates health resorts and spas, creating a unique, luxurious, and innovative spa experience.

The company has worked with clients in Australia, Italy, Dubai, Turkey, Lebanon, Mongolia, UAE, Turkey, Cambodia, and Vietnam, and the firm managed the Thai Spas on SeaDream Yacht Club's luxury cruises. In addition, Spa Origins assisted with the operational concept, interior design, menu, operations, and staff recruiting and training for [Kami Spa](#) in Rome, an Oriental spa that opened in 2008.

"As we are based in Thailand, arguably the Spa Capital of the World, we are in an ideal location to source the very best and most creative of spa products, spa staff, spa designs and spa equipment to service clients around the globe who are seeking a cost effective approach to setting up a quality and professional spa operation," according to Spa Origins Director Andrew Jacka.



A team from [Thai Heritage Spa Co., Ltd.](#) designed and built

the renowned spa at Bangkok's landmark [Oriental Hotel](#) and created and operates the exclusive [Sivalai Spa](#) at the [Royal Bangkok Sports Club](#), operated by the Crown Property Bureau, which manages property for the King of Thailand and his immediate family. Thai Heritage Spa also has provided conceptual and architectural design, menu-planning, operations, management, and/or staff recruitment and training services to name-brand [spa projects throughout Thailand](#) as well as internationally, including in the United States, Bahrain, Bermuda, Dubai, Egypt, India, Iran, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Qatar, Singapore, Tanzania, Turkey, and Vietnam.

The company's [Thai Heritage Spa School](#) trains students to manage and operate Thai spas, primarily overseas, with classes in spa architecture and menu design as well as traditional Thai massage therapy and Western massage techniques. Since the school's establishment in 2003, more than 80 percent of its 250 graduate have taken jobs overseas, generally at world-class spas in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia.

[Wat Pro Thai Traditional Medical and Massage School](#) is recognized worldwide for its courses in traditional Thai medicine and massage, including instruction in massage, healing methods, herbal drug recipes, and diagnosis and treatment for general ailments and baby illnesses.

Operating since 1955 inside the Temple of the Reclining Buddha, Wat Pro has sent many of its graduates into the spa business around the globe, including to the United States, to such locations as [Pho Siam](#) and [Leelavadee](#) in Los Angeles.



Leelavadee

THAI WELLNESS CENTER Located just minutes from Los Angeles International Airport, Leelavadee's Thai Wellness Center provides physical and spiritual healing with a staff that includes Wat Pro graduates who trained and practiced for 20 years before joining the spa.

Leelavadee's spa services include massages, reflexology, chiropractic, acupuncture, facials, body treatments (including scrub, mud, and wrap), hand and foot paraffin, and other therapies for individuals and small groups. Reflecting its origins, Leelavadee uses authentic, imported Thai furniture, artwork, and spa products.

Managing Director Nayada Dhanaphatana says Leelavadee, which opened in April 2009, is the largest and most authentically Thai spa in the United States. Leelavadee operates its own training facility and plans to franchise Thai spa operations in the United States. The organization also will operate a satellite office for the massage school East-West Institute of Hand Therapy.

Spas in Thailand must meet government standards for certification and best-practices criteria established by the government and the private sector. Organizations that provide training in professional Thai spa services internationally are expected to meet those same criteria and standards as well as ISPA global best practices.

Having developed strategies to encourage the expansion of the country's cosmetics and spa products industry, Thailand's Department of Export Promotion (DEP) is:

- Supporting research and development in raw materials;
- Supporting technology to increase the efficiency and quality of cosmetic and spa product manufacturing;
- Expanding the sector's presence both in the primary target markets and in potential markets;
- Increasing business opportunities and new product development by participating with Thai companies in exhibitions and seminars in Thailand and overseas, such as the annual Thailand Health and Beauty Show. A number of Thai firms participated in the 2009 show in Bangkok. For 2010, the Health and Beauty Show has been incorporated into the Bangkok International Gift Fair and Bangkok International Houseware Fair (BIG + BIH), which will be held October 19-24 at the Bangkok International Trade & Exhibition Center; and,
- Participating in international shows in other countries, such as Cosmoprof in Bologna, Italy, or Cosmoprof Asia in Hong Kong.

As the following chart indicates, Thailand's primary exports in the cosmetics and spa products sector are soap, facial and skin care products, and raw materials for cosmetics. The industry includes a wide range of companies and employs nearly a quarter of a million people in Thailand.

| Main export items | Percentage |
|--|------------|
| Hair products | 0.22 |
| Cosmetic raw materials | 22.50 |
| Facial and skin products | 26.68 |
| Shave and aftershave, bath, and deodorant products | 14.67 |
| Soap | 33.84 |
| Dental care products | 1.97 |
| Perfumes, cologne, and fragrances | 0.12 |
| Number of Cosmetic and Spa Industry Manufacturers by Size | 762 |
| Small (fewer than 50 employees) | 520 |
| Medium (51-200 employees) | 220 |
| Large (more than 200 employees) | 22 |

Total employment: 220,000 employees

Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Vietnam are the primary target for Thailand's cosmetic and spa

products, with demand for these products growing throughout Asia.

Thai companies also are setting their sights on doing more business in the United States, as ingredient suppliers to cosmetic and beauty product manufacturers, as OEM manufacturers, and as sources of products for consumers, both online and through importers.

The United States is a logical target not only for Thai beauty products but also for Thai spas and Thai-trained spa therapists. American spa locations have grown an average of 20 percent annually in the last eight years, there were 18,100 spas operating in the United States in 2008, and the United States has 32 million active spa goers, according to the [International Spa Association](#) (ISPA).

Top 10 Markets for Thai Cosmetics, Beauty Products, and Spa Products

| Countries | Value (billion \$US) | Value (billion \$US) | Value (billion \$US) | % Growth Rate | % Growth Rate | % Growth Rate | % Share | % Share | % Share |
|----------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
| | | | (Jan-March) | | | (Jan-March) | | | (Jan-March) |
| 1. Japan | 164.92 | 275.68 | 123.82 | -6.83 | 67.16 | 180.94 | 8.27 | 17.44 | 26.06 |
| 2. Malaysia | 697.71 | 152.57 | 41.06 | 487.12 | -78.13 | 20.44 | 34.97 | 9.65 | 8.64 |
| 3. Indonesia | 143.46 | 133.77 | 39.30 | 19.93 | -6.75 | 15.56 | 7.19 | 8.46 | 8.27 |
| 4. Philippines | 106.78 | 122.72 | 34.10 | 20.53 | 14.92 | 6.38 | 5.35 | 7.76 | 7.18 |
| 5. Australia | 105.41 | 106.18 | 27.37 | 14.91 | 0.73 | 22.16 | 5.28 | 6.72 | 5.76 |
| 6. Vietnam | 84.88 | 100.38 | 24.57 | 39.25 | 18.26 | 21.44 | 4.25 | 6.35 | 5.17 |
| 7. Cambodia | 44.61 | 53.19 | 17.74 | 20.65 | 19.22 | 41.23 | 2.24 | 3.37 | 3.73 |
| 8. Myanmar | 40.77 | 45.61 | 15.18 | 44.74 | 11.86 | 78.98 | 2.04 | 2.89 | 3.19 |
| 9. Singapore | 58.96 | 54.59 | 14.22 | 11.88 | -7.41 | 16.46 | 2.95 | 3.45 | 2.99 |
| 10. China | 51.59 | 52.46 | 11.56 | 32.39 | 1.68 | -18.91 | 2.59 | 3.32 | 2.43 |
| Total | 1,499.10 | 1,097.10 | 348.90 | 84.27 | -26.81 | 48.87 | 75.13 | 69.41 | 73.44 |
| Others | 496.10 | 483.50 | 126.20 | 18.13 | -2.55 | 26.67 | 24.87 | 30.59 | 26.56 |
| Overall | 1,995.22 | 1,580.60 | 475.11 | 61.75 | -20.78 | 42.25 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

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Thai Trade Center Los Angeles

News

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For More Information, Contact:

Kristine Heine, Global Communicators, 202-371-9600

kheine@globalcommunicators.com

THAI LEATHER TRADE MISSION WILL VISIT LOS ANGELES AUGUST 30-SEPTEMBER 3

U.S. Companies Interested in Meeting Thai Leather Good Manufacturers and Designers Should Contact Thai Trade Center, Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES – A Thai leather group comprising leading leather products manufacturers will visit here August 30-September 3 to seek potential trade partners who would be interested in representing their brands in the United States, Thai Trade Center, Los Angeles (TTC) announced today.

Eight leading Thai leather goods companies will participate in the trade mission to Los Angeles – Eleganza, Champ Ace, Champ Kabin, MBP Leather Industries (Albédo brand), O.C.I. Leather Co., Ltd., Paragon, Shepherd Co., and Uni G Co. Ltd.. Most of these companies have been exporting to the United States and/or Europe for 10 to 20 years or more and are looking for opportunities to expand their business in North America, according to Thai Trade Center LA Executive Director Chantira J. Vivatrat.

Representatives of the companies will meet with U.S. trade associations and businesses to learn what types of designs and leather products appeal most to their customers.

They also will look for new markets for the kinds of creative leather items Thai artisans are designing and opportunities to strengthen the image of Thai brands being sold in the United States.

“Thai designs and quality of Thai leather products are versatile and varied and can satisfy both the general consumer and premium markets, and we believe there’s an untapped potential for them here,” Mrs. Vivatrat said.

The group will visit the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising (FIDM) in Los Angeles to discuss potential future cooperation between American designers and Thai manufacturers.

In addition, participants will meet with distributors and logistics companies in the Los Angeles area.

The trade mission is part of the Thai government’s plan to introduce the country’s various leather brands to the American market.

TTC is helping arrange meetings for the mission and will work closely with the group to develop potential trade opportunities for Thai leather products in the U.S. market.

Among the leather products the participating companies manufacture are hand bags, briefcase, wallets, corporate premium gifts, diary folders, business card holders, and other small leather goods.

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U.S. companies interested in meeting with the Thai leather mission or seeking additional information should contact TTC at ttcla@live.com or 323-466-9645.

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Thai Trade Center, Los Angeles
611 N. Larchmont Blvd, 3rd Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90004
Tel 323 466 9645
Fax 323 466 1559
ttcla@earthlink.net ttcla@live.com
<http://www.thaitradeusa.com/home/>